The PULPIT

A Periodical of Contemporary Preaching

FEBRUARY 1949

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OF RELIGION

No Continuing City
By D. ALLAN EASTON

At the Brink of the River
By EDGAR F. MAGNIN

The Whole Panoply of God
By ALBERT JOSEPH McCARTNEY

The Kingdom of God
By NORMAN S. REAM

The Coming of Day
By PORTER FRENCH

How to Love Your Enemies
By WILLIAM CLYDE HOWARD

The Preacher's Friends
By EDWIN E. AUBREY

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A Periodical of Contemporary Preaching

Charles Clayton Morrison, *Editor*

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In the March Pulpit

For the March issue of the Pulpit we are pleased to announce two excellent sermons on the church. One is by Edgar DeWitt Jones of Pleasant Ridge, Mich., and is entitled "Magnificent Reminders." The other is from David A. MacLennan of Timothy Eaton Memorial Church, Toronto. Dr. MacLennan's sermon has as its subject, "Why Church?"

For the Lenten season there will be a sermon by Edgar M. Carlson, president of Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, Minn. Based on I Peter 2:24, this sermon deals with "The Triumph of Love." Other Lenten sermons and materials are also planned.

A fourth sermon is by George Humphries Tolley of the First Baptist Church, Jamestown, N. Y. This excellent sermon is on the responsibilities of being a Christian and is entitled, "I Must."

It is with great pleasure that we announce an article entitled, "The Minister and Poetry," by Thomas Curtis Clark who was for many years associate editor of this magazine. Retired now, and living in a suburb of Chicago, Mr. Clark is devoting his time to writing.

Of course there will be the usual features; editorials, a sermon for children, a pastoral prayer, a selection of sermon illustrations and the column, "Sermons in Review." Don't miss your March Pulpit.

WHO'S WHO IN THIS ISSUE

Rev. D. Allan Easton, when we last heard from him, was minister of the Union Church of Peiping, China. This sermon was preached the Sunday after it was announced that all nonessential personnel would be evacuated from the city. He is a Scot, educated in Glasgow, with an S.T.M. from Union Theological Seminary.

Rabbi Edgar F. Magnin is a native of San Francisco. A graduate of Hebrew Union College and the University of Cincinnati, he has been rabbi of Wilshire Boulevard Temple, Los Angeles, for over 33 years. He has been active in many cultural, philanthropic and civic causes in his city for many years.

Rev. Albert Joseph McCartney needs no introduction to Pulpit readers. He is widely known as director of the renowned Chicago Sunday Evening Club which meets each Sunday evening during the winter months in that city's Orchestra Hall. This sermon is one of a series of Bible studies currently being given by Dr. McCartney.

Rev. Norman S. Ream is minister of Summerfield Methodist Church, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. This sermon, accepted for publication over a year ago, was set and ready to be printed when the printers' strike began last year. We are happy that it now at last sees the light of day.

Rev. Porter French is minister of the Congregational Christian Church, Lima, Ohio. A graduate of Chicago Theological Seminary, he served churches in Illinois and Colorado before going to his present post. He was an instructor in Jaffna College, Ceylon, under the A.B.C.F.M. in 1933-34 and at one time was chaplain of the Colorado State Reformatory.

Rev. William Clyde Howard is pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church, Chicago, where he has served since 1926. He is a graduate of Cincinnati University and Lane Theological Seminary. He is moderator of the Chicago Presbytery and the Presbyterian Synod of Illinois. He is on the executive committee and board of directors of McCormick Theological Seminary.

Rev. Edwin E. Aubrey, president of Crozer Theological Seminary, Chester, Pa., and professor of Christian social theology there, has recently accepted an appointment as professor of religious thought at the University of Pennsylvania. He will asume his new position next fall.

We have been asked by the Rev. John Sutherland Bonnell to correct a statement made in last month's issue of the Pulpit. Dr. Bonnell broadcasts each Sunday afternoon over the American Broadcasting Company network. His program, known as "National Vespers" originates from the studios of WJZ. Our error.

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THE EDITOR'S PAGE

The Event of the Month

THE Foreign Missions Conference, which includes 108 mission boards, representing 61 denominations, has voted not to enter the "National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States," now in process of formation. The decision not to join with the International Council of Religious Education, the Home Missions Council, the Federal Council of Churches and four other interchurch agencies in the creation of a united agency more directly responsible to the churches, is regrettable. The F.M.C. now includes certain boards outside the United States, and I can understand that there might be some reluctance to have its scope limited to that of a national body. Also, certain denominations are not yet willing for their boards to affiliate with those of other denominations in the new organization. But such considerations are outweighed by the fact that the 24 denominations now in the Federal Council have voted to participate. The rejection of the democratic principle of more direct responsibility to the churches is not easy to understand. The F.M.C. is an independent body. Its corporate connection with the churches would be more vital and responsible in the N.C.C. It is difficult to imagine a "National Council of Churches" with no foreign missions department. Perhaps some temporary arrangement can be made by which the field can be divided between the F.M.C. and the National Council. If this cannot be done, there would seem to be no course open save for the N.C.C., when its organization is completed, to provide for a department of foreign missions in which the denominations that desire to participate may do so.

A Regrettable Decision

The Book of the Month

KEEPING MEN ON THEIR FEET. *By Frederick K. Stamm. Harper, $2.00.*

HERE are twenty-four sermons delivered by a distinguished pastor and radio preacher and addressed to men and women in every condition of life. The mark of the author's radio experience is on them. I believe that such an experience is good for any preacher. It sharpens his thought, keeps his mind on tip-toe to arrest and hold the attention of his invisible audience, and compels him to speak a living word to the vital needs of our frustrated, anxious, perplexed and, alas, often defeated humanity. Though his audience is heterogeneous and scattered, he cannot scatter. He must find the common denominators of human experience and concentrate his message upon one or another of them. This Dr. Stamm does with extraordinary insight and power. In this volume he takes as his common denominator the fact that the typical men and women of our time are spiritually shaken with doubts, fears and a feeling of life's futility. They have not given up, but they are reeling. They need to be steadied, put on their feet and kept upright with an access and the outlook of faith. Every one of these sermons is directed to this prevalent human need, as sharply as the marksman aims his shot at the bull'seye. Simple language, many but not too many illustrations, and the contagion of the preacher's own high principle give the reader, as they must have given the hearer, fresh hope and the courage to go on.

A Thought for the Month

FAITH is inherently conservative. It lets go only what it must, and when it must. Religion is the object of no little chiding by scientific people on this account. It is charged that Christians cherish their beliefs too dearly, and cling to them against what may seem at the moment contrary evidence. We are exhorted to hold our faith tentatively, as a chemist or physicist holds his conclusions, and to change without emotion when new knowledge comes, as the scientist changes his views when an experiment reveals new facts or laws. There is, of course, much justification for such criticism. Christians should learn to discriminate between the essentials and the irrelevancies of faith. Like science, faith must grow from less to more. And growth means that some things must be left behind which once we cherished. Nevertheless, the religious attitude cannot be like the scientific attitude. The scientist has no personal stake in his scientific beliefs. But in religious experience we weave our loyalties around the Object of our faith and commit our very lives to its keeping. We cannot let that Object vanish or see it menaced without pain. Therefore, faith clings to it with the tenacity of a lover. It cannot be otherwise. And who would have it otherwise? Allowing full justice to the criticism that faith clings too long to outworn formulas, nevertheless, if I had to choose, I would prefer, like Wordsworth, to be "a pagan suckled in a creed outworn," than to have no faith at all. Conservatism is bad when it is just blind stubbornness. But it should not allow itself to be "blown about with every wind of doctrine."

A Good Kind of Conservatism

Charles Clayton Morrison

No Continuing City

By D. ALLAN EASTON

Here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come. Hebrews 13:14.

IT IS strange how often in the past few years the fall of a city has been the means of bringing home to us the real significance of the events of our time. It seems as though we persist in keeping our eyes shut to much that goes on in the world around us, until a great metropolis changes hands, turning upside down the lives of hundreds of thousands of people, and suddenly and abruptly we are compelled to recognize the existence of forces which have been at work for years but to which until that time we have been to all intents and purposes blind.

For many of us, it began with the fall of Moukden seventeen years ago, that first open manifestation of the break-down in international morality which was to lead to the second World War. Many of the cities of China followed, Peiping, Shanghai, Nanking, and a host of others. Then there were Addis Ababa, Warsaw, Oslo, Rotterdam, Brussels, Paris, Hongkong, Manila, Singapore, Rangoon, and all the rest. As each one fell, we remember the strange sinking feeling which came over us all, the sense of being up against something utterly beyond our control, something which was slowly but surely reshaping the world we had known.

A FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE

It was not just that one set of flags was being pulled down and new ones hoisted in their places, nor even that governments were toppling in ruins around us. Something still more fundamental and far-reaching was involved. It meant the disappearance of landmarks which we had taken for granted since our earliest childhood, a frightening reminder that the world was not the stable place we had been brought up to believe. It meant that a great multitude of people were being introduced to new ways of life and, whether they liked it or not, were being taught new ideals, new standards of judgment, and ideas of value. Things were happening in the world, the consequences of which could never fully be undone.

It was a frightening experience but it was an experience which for the time compelled us to adjust ourselves to the fact that a new world was in the making and that there never could be any return to the past. In the turmoil of war we accepted that fact and in a measure prepared to meet it. The crisis ended, and is it not true to say that we too readily forgot?

Once again cities are falling around us and the same message rings anew in our ears. Once again we are inescapably confronted with the fact that new forces have been unleashed in our time which will not lightly be gainsaid, that in this world there is neither lasting security nor stability. Here indeed, as every one of us gathered in this church tonight is only too well aware, we have no continuing city.

On such an occasion as this it is encouraging and helpful to look back over the long story of the church and to remind ourselves that there is nothing particularly unique about our position. It has all happened before and Christian men and women in the past have been confronted with just such a situation as that which confronts us today. Yet they emerged from it stronger and with a richer and fuller faith and an infinitely deeper understanding of God's ways.

A WORSE TIME THAN NOW

The church once faced a situation infinitely worse than that which disturbs us now. That occasion was the fall of Rome to the barbarian hordes more than 1500 years ago. Rome was the Eternal City, inviolate for centuries, the accepted center of world order and civilization. To appreciate the significance of its fall, try and imagine our feelings if we were to be informed that London, New York, and Washington had all capitulated suddenly to invading armies. To civilized men and women it meant the end of everything they held most dear.

In that hour of darkness and despair, one man was adequate to the situation. While others were helpless with fear, a bishop, nearly sixty years of age, sat down to write a book which it took him thirteen years to finish and which was to become one of the great classics of Christian literature. Under the circumstances one might have expected its title to have been "Concerning the City of Rome," an old man's memoirs of the Empire at its height. But it was called *Concerning the City of God* and Augustine, its author, explains its origin thus: "After the storming and sack of Rome by the Goths . . . my zeal was kindled for the house of God and I was induced to defend the city of God against the calumnies and misrepresentations of its foes."

Concerning the City of God was an attempt to answer the kind of questions men were asking, questions not dissimilar to the kind men are asking today, and it remains even now one of the most penetrating defenses of God's ways to man. Its main theme is the difference between the cities of men and the city of God.

This, in effect, is what he says to his readers. You thought of the Christian church as the state church of the Roman Empire. It seemed to you that the two were inextricably bound up together, that the passing of Rome and of the stability which she gave to the world meant the end of everything from the point of view of the church. You were utterly wrong. Rome could never have lasted. Rome was a city built by men, and the

order and stability which she brought to the world were human contrivances which like all things human had to die. Rome was "an earthly city which shall not be everlasting." The church is different. The church is divine and therefore indestructible, God's instrument for the fulfillment of his purposes in the world. It is composed of men and women who are called into it by the act of God, men and women who recognize that they are but "sojourners in that earthly city" and that their true citizenship is in the "heavenly Jerusalem." Human cities may rise and fall, world orders change, civilizations perish, but the city to which these men and women belong—the city of God—remaineth.

Standing at the end of an age, amidst scenes of desolation and disorder, Augustine remained calm and confident because he believed that, come what might, the church of God would go on building. A strange world order was struggling to be born, but in the end it would but provide a new environment in which the new Jerusalem might be manifested amongst men. You remember that, from the point of view of history, Augustine was right. Six centuries of darkness followed, but in the darkness the earthly manifestation of the city of God quietly grew from strength to strength and there emerged finally a new civilization with the church of Christ rooted in its very heart, a civilization which, being human like all civilizations, had also to pass.

OUR WORLD IS CHANGING

We too live in a changing world. Can we share the faith of Augustine, and make his distinction between the cities of men and the city of God? We are so prone to associate the church with the world as we know it, to assume that any change inevitably means an end to all Christian witness and Christian activity. We take it for granted that any major alteration in the order of civilization familiar to us brings with it death to the church of Christ. We forget that civilizations are man-made and, like all the work of men's hands, are necessarily subject to change, that the one thing which is ultimately indestructible is the city of God.

We have been hearing a great deal in recent months about the First General Assembly of the World Council of Churches, held in Amsterdam last summer. We have heard so much about it that I imagine some of us sometimes get a little tired of the subject. It can be made to sound so dull, as though it were just another international organization in a world which is already full of international organizations which somehow fail to function as they ought. Stop thinking of it organizationally, I beg of you, and consider it rather as an earthly manifestation of the city of God, living bricks from every nation divinely built into one. So in these days of strife and disorder, somehow it seems that the church is being drawn closer and closer together, as though even now it were being prepared to take effective part in the new order which is being born, as though it itself were being reshaped in its very life and organization that it might bear faithful witness on earth to that unity which is ultimately only to be found in the city of God which is yet to come.

Whatever the future may hold in store for us, wherever our paths may lie, let this be our common resolve, to live the remainder of our lives as men and women who first and foremost are citizens of the city of God. Of course we have our earthly loyalties. We are citizens of republics, commonwealths, kingdoms, call them what you will. That earthly citizenship gives us each different responsibilities which it is our duty to discharge as faithfully as lies within our power. But over and above we have a greater common loyalty and a greater common responsibility, our loyalty to the new Jerusalem, our responsibility to its earthly manifestation, the world-wide church of Christ.

GOOD CITIZENS OF THE KINGDOM

What does it mean to be a good citizen of the city of God? May I suggest to you four different lines of thought?

In the first place, as citizens of the city of God we share a common loyalty which transcends all lesser loyalties which separate us. We have already experienced something of that in our fellowship here. What a conglomeration of denominations we represent! What a rich variety of nationalities and races! Yet, in spite of all these things which might have been expected to keep us apart, we have shared in the deepest sense a common congregational life. In the year 1670, deploring the tendency amongst Christians to break up into sects and factions, Richard Baxter wrote: " . . . all this because they know no more than they see, or are affected with no more; but live as if England or Europe were all the world. One year's abode in Asia or Africa might cure this errour." It is nearly three hundred years since these words were written, but we have lived in Asia and we have learned for ourselves their truth.

Yet it will not always be as easy as it has been here. We shall find ourselves back some day in situations where there is rivalry between the denominations, international misunderstanding, inter-racial strife and discord—and it is then that our citizenship in the new Jerusalem is going to be tested, then that we must pray God for strength to remain loyal.

THEY LOST ALL THEY HAD

In the second place, the citizen of the city of God sits lightly to earthly goods and chattels. He accepts the pleasures of this world as gifts which come from God. Thus he does not needlessly court poverty or suffering. At the same time, recognizing that there are more important things in life, he does not allow himself to be enslaved by his material possessions. How well Augustine knew that! Commenting on the sufferings of certain Christians in his day he writes: "They lost all they had. . . . But did they lose their faith? Did they lose their godliness? Did they lose the treasures of the heart? This is the wealth of the Christian."

I wonder if I may say something to you today which has been on my mind for some time past, something which came to me in Scotland and which remains with me here, a challenge which I address to myself as much

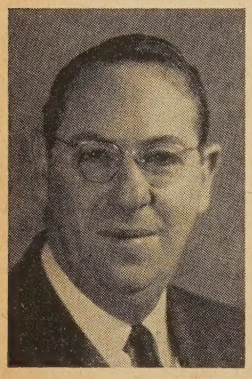
(Continued on page 41)

At the Brink of the River

By EDGAR F. MAGNIN

And the ill-favoured kine did eat up the seven well-favoured kine. Genesis 41:4.

GENESIS contains the dramatic story of Pharaoh's dream. Even a king is not immune from the intrusion of unpleasant thoughts and premonitions. The guards who stand outside his chamber to protect him from physical attack have no control over the onrush of troublesome thoughts that spring out of the subconscious mind. In his dream, Pharaoh stands at the brink of the river. First he sees seven healthy cattle arise out of the river, which are consumed by seven unhealthy ones. Following this, seven good ears of corn growing on one stalk are swallowed up by seven ears of corn which have been blasted by the wind. The next morning Pharaoh summons his wise men to interpret the dream, which they are unable to do. The chief butler then remembers Joseph, who interpreted his dreams and those of the chief baker while they were in prison, and calls this to Pharaoh's attention. Pharaoh summons Joseph who explains that the seven healthy kine and ears of corn represent seven years of prosperity and the unhealthy ones which consume them seven years of famine, and suggests that the king appoint a man to prepare the nation against the days of evil that are to come.



FORCES THAT DESTROY

I have often thought of this story as having a deeper significance than appears on the surface. It contains a profound bit of symbolism, constituting a warning not only to Pharaoh but to individuals and nations throughout all ages. The unhealthy kine and ears of corn which consume the good ones stand for the forces that destroy individuals and nations. These forces are lodged in the primitive urges which have not been entirely suppressed by our so-called "civilization." They are also the weaknesses that inhere in our institutions and traditions. Moreover, these destructive forces work much more quickly than the constructive ones.

It takes a long time to build a skyscraper but it can be demolished in one second by a bomb. The strongest and healthiest individual can become a victim of an infection from bacteria, so small that they cannot be seen even under a microscope, or by a sudden accident.

Democratic forms of government can be overthrown at a time of economic crisis, when people lose their heads and become hysterical, and are prone to listen to the smooth, honeyed words of some ambitious and unscrupulous demagogue. A peaceful world can be plunged into a bloody war that costs billions of dollars, that brings about the destruction of millions of lives, and the crippling of millions of bodies, by the act of one hot-headed or stubborn leader. A good reputation may be lost in a moment of weakness and temptation. A happy family life can be ended by one single act of rashness or anger. The penitentiaries are filled with people who made their first mistake in a moment of thoughtlessness. Always the lean cattle arise to consume the healthy ones and the blasted ears to devour the good ones. The wise man is on the alert for the destructive forces that are out to wreck his life and peace of mind and he seeks to control them, and the wise nation does the same thing.

SOCIETY IS CONTROLLED BY IDEALS

Society is controlled by ideals rather than by things. In fact thoughts are things. We are governed by moods, emotions, sentiments rather than by cold logic. "He who governs his passion is stronger than one who captures a city," was said by one of the ancient sages. Any fool can fiddle while Rome burns, or even start the fire, but it takes wisdom and character to prevent a holocaust. Society employs many methods to prevent the spread of infectious diseases. Why should it not be just as much concerned with the spread of false ideas or immoral infection? No price is too big to pay for the highest type of education, both secular and religious.

Among the forces that destroy the individual and society are greed, selfishness, over-ambition, lust for power, self-indulgence, lack of moral discipline and self-control, anger, cruelty, jealousy, and hatred. Some of these qualities, like anger, cruelty, jealousy, once served a useful purpose when man lived on the primitive level. Food was scarce and the individual had to be on the constant lookout for lurking enemies. But today these qualities act as a boomerang on those who exercise them. In an age in which the world has shrunk and where there can be sufficient food and other necessities for all, society must progress through cooperation and go forward to pursue an ideal goal or it will degenerate into barbarism or perhaps something worse than barbarism with the present technological facilities for self-destruction. Moreover, we realize today that character and idealism are necessary for happiness and peace of mind. Any form of evil can destroy the mind and body of an individual as well as his soul.

We must be on the constant lookout for the destructive forces and be prepared to offset them by the healthy qualities, such as patience, a desire for understanding others, friendliness, appreciation of the rights and liberties of all people irrespective of race, religion, economic or social status. In the last analysis, there is nothing more practical than the golden rule.

Religion, however, comprises more than mere ethics.

Man requires the stimulating effect of a faith in a spiritual being greater than himself and a belief in the divine sanction of the moral law. A certain amount of ritual and tradition coupled with this faith serve as an extra support. Unfortunately, through the ages religions have gotten away from the basic principles and precepts of the founders and have degenerated into formalism, ritualism, and at times gross superstition. Myths have too often over-shadowed morality and exclusiveness has taken the place of universalism and the spirit of brotherhood. If man is to be rescued from the Frankensteins he is creating, both in his mind and in his machines, he must perforce become religious in the sense in which the great founders of all faiths understood that term.

Moses, Amos, Isaiah, Hillel, Jesus and a host of other religiously inspired leaders always combined the mystical aspect of religion with the ethical. The two blended together in such a way as to make for a complete and beautiful personality, which should be the aim and object of the followers of these great teachers. Most of them lifted up their voices against hypocrisy, mere formalism, and lip worship. They recognized the basic truth of the existence of the moral law in the universe as divine law, and summoned their followers to return to God, who alone could redeem them from the bondage of sin. They knew that human beings were helpless because they refused to help themselves, and preferred to remain on the level of barbarism while pretending to be pious. Theirs was not a religion of one day a year, or even one day a week. Religion to them was an all absorbing influence that guided them in every word they spoke and every act they performed, and they intended that it wield the same beneficent influence on the lives of others. All of them looked forward to the day when peace would reign on earth, but each and everyone of them knew that there could be no peace on earth until peace reigned in the hearts and minds of all the people that inhabited the earth. To them religion, like charity, began at home; namely, in the heart and mind of the individual himself.

THE EVIL INCLINATION

They knew the temptations that lurked in all directions and that bound people in chains to their primitive past. The Jewish people spoke of the good inclination, "yetzer hatov," and the evil inclination, "yetzer hara." They thought of the human mind and heart as a battleground in which these two forces are constantly striving for dominion. They prayed to God every day that they might align themselves with the forces of good against the forces of evil both externally and within themselves. Christian theology stressed the same idea in another way. Whether one believed in Satan as a real force or as a symbol, the thought behind that concept was quite explicit.

In the traditional Jewish prayer book we read: "O God, keep my tongue from evil and my lips from speaking guile. Be my support when grief silences my voice, and my comfort when woe bends my spirit. Implant humility in my soul, and strengthen my heart with perfect faith in Thee. Help me to be strong in temptation and trial, and to be patient and forgiving when others wrong me. Guide me by the light of Thy counsel, that I may ever find strength in Thee, my Rock and my Redeemer."

And on Saturday mornings we read in the synagogue: "May it be Thy will, O Lord our God, to lead us in Thy ways, that Thy name may be honored and Israel be blessed by our actions. May we walk according to the precepts of Thy law, and, remaining firm in our devotion to Thee, may we never fall into temptation or shame. May our better nature always prompt us to discharge our duties faithfully and to do good with a willing heart. Gird us with strength to govern our inclinations and to rule them in accordance with Thy will. Grant, O Father, that by our conduct we may win favor in Thine eyes and in the eyes of our fellow men." The Christian liturgy of all sects is replete with similar sentiments.

EVERY INDIVIDUAL MUST DECIDE

There comes a time in the life of every individual when he must make the great decision whether he wants to live or die, spiritually speaking. "To be or not to be, that is the question." And there are times when nations must make that same decision. They must make up their minds either to live according to the will of God and progress or defy him and deteriorate, like the great empires of ancient days.

And if they will to live they must beware lest the unhealthy and lean kine consume the healthy ones, and the blasted ears of corn swallow up the good ones. We are like Pharaoh who dreamed that he stood at the brink of the river. We are all standing at the brink of a river. It is the river of time that flows from the hills of eternity to the sea of eternity. And all life is a dream. It can be made a beautiful and lovely dream or a nightmare. It is up to us as individuals and as nations to make the choice, and in the words of Hillel, "if not now, when?"

A Pastoral Prayer

By BROWNE BARR

INFINITE and eternal God our Father, God of pity and God of grace, come, we beseech Thee, into our hearts this day that Thou mayest be no distant dream or dim Idea which we vaguely worship, but a living Power, a disturbing Presence, and an abiding Friend, to chide us and to comfort us, to upset us and uphold us, to redirect us and to redeem us, children of our time and place, yet members of Thy everlasting household.

May the sense of our rightful and abiding place at Thy side in this world and for all eternity so command our thoughts that the concerns which plague us and the fears which haunt us may slip from our shackled hearts that we may no longer be prisoners of ourselves and of our fears, but freedmen in Christ Jesus, the teacher of our souls and the light of our lives. Deliver us from the faithlessness which drives us impatiently

like lost sheep who do not know that the Good Shepherd is there in every darkness and storm seeking them ere they know they are lost.

Forgive us the timidity of our faith by which we strive to accommodate Thee to the wisdom of our own minds and compel Thee to fit the understanding of our hearts and press Thee in conformity to the standards which we have established. Bestow upon us the boldness to believe what we cannot know and to receive what we have not created and to accept what we cannot always understand, knowing and receiving and accepting in confidence that Thou, who hast weighed the hills as dust hast too heard the sparrow's fall and the anguish of our softest cry.

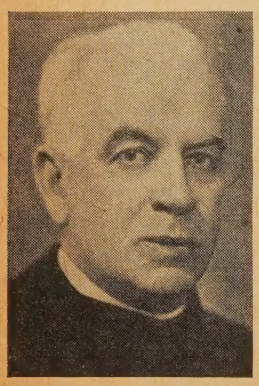
Upon Thine everlasting arms we now throw ourselves and all that we bear of sorrow and of joy. Amen.

The Whole Panoply of God

By ALBERT JOSEPH McCARTNEY

An Exposition of Ephesians 6

SOMETIMES a dramatic personal experience will shed more light on the meaning of a chapter of Scripture than a whole season's detached study. This sixth chapter of Ephesians has always been a favorite one with me but it was indelibly impressed upon me through an experience that fell to my lot on the day that England declared war. My family and I had just completed a 5000 mile motor trip through Europe in a reconstructed jalopy that my son, Benjamin, had retrieved from some junk pile. When we arrived in London gas masks were being distributed, people were busy on the streets filling sand bags and piling them beside the walls of stores and churches. A constant procession of devout people went to pray at the Unknown Soldier's grave in Westminster Abbey. Blackouts were imperative and in the daytime there was much running back and forth between No. 10 Downing Street and Parliament House. The atmosphere was tense with hope and fear, and prayer that the country might be spared the scourge of war. Then came the Sabbath day when everyone knew that at 11 o'clock Germany must have replied to the ultimatum to arrest the invasion of Poland or England would declare war.



I

We were staying in Queen Anne's Mansions and our window looked out on Wellington Chapel and parade grounds. We decided to attend divine worship in the famous chapel. You may remember that it was subsequently destroyed by a bomb and the chaplain and a number of the worshipers killed.

The service opened with the processional of the boys' choir, all dressed in new khaki uniforms like boy scouts. The chaplain opened the service by stepping to the chancel steps and announcing that very presently there would be an air raid signal but not to be alarmed that it was only a testing out of the equipment. Then he went on with the conventional service, selecting this sixth chapter for the scripture reading. Presently the verger, with staff and gown, a kind of glorified sexton in England, came up the aisle and handed the chaplain a note. We all held our breath for we knew that the contents of that note meant life or death to thousands, for the time for the ultimatum had expired. He then asked the congregation to stand as he solemnly announced that England was now at war. There was a silence that you could cut with a knife, as dramatic and emotional as any I have ever experienced. Then he had that English and Scotch congregation sing:

O for a faith that will not shrink
Tho' pressed by every foe,
That will not tremble on the Brink
Of any earthly woe!

That will not murmur nor complain
Beneath the chastening rod,
But, in the hour of grief or pain,
Will lean upon its God;

A faith that shines more bright and clear
When tempests rage without;
That when in danger knows no fear,
In darkness feels no doubt.

He announced the text, extraordinarily appropriate, from the words of this chapter. " . . . and having done all, to stand." He had scarcely gotten started in his sermon when the verger came hurrying up the aisle and there was a whispered conference between the chaplain and some high officials on the front seat. The chaplain announced that a real air raid was on the way and for everyone to leave the chapel immediately and take to their respective air raid shelters after the benediction.

" . . . and having done all, to stand." And all the world knows how magnificently and heroically England held her stand. That is the key word in this chapter which describes the panoply of the Christian soldier. Paul returns to it again and again in this brief passage: "Put on the whole armour of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore."

Dr. Weymouth's translation reads thus: "Put on the complete armour of God so you may be able to stand firm against the stratagems of the devil that you may be able to stand your ground in the day of battle, and having done all, to stand."

Some people never seem to be able to take a stand.

They are always shifting from one position to another. You can't locate them politically or morally or religiously. They will appear to be on one side of an issue in one group and on quite the opposite side in another group. They have the characteristics of a weathervane. Paul cautioned against such change of stand. "Be not driven about by every wind of doctrine." The Christian soldier should be one who can take a stand and stand up to it.

To appreciate this exhortation of the apostle we should remember to whom Paul was giving this counsel. The Ephesians to whom the letter is addressed composed a band of humble Christians " . . . not many wise, not many mighty," who had only recently come out of a pagan world and a pagan faith to accept the tenets of a crucified Jew. Ephesus was one of the four great cities of the age, ranking with Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch. Because of its rich hinterland it was seething with prosperity, lolling in luxury and committed to the licentious worship of Diana of the Ephesians, whose towering effigy could be seen by sailors far at sea. These constituted the exterior antagonisms to which Paul makes reference. These Christians were also against these antagonisms and it was to fortify their resistance to the insidious and insistent influence of their material surroundings that Paul bids them equip themselves with the "full armour of God" and hold to their ground, that is to their convictions.

II

But beyond these open hostilities Paul sees the invisible antagonisms of the spirit. The struggle, he declares, is sometimes more than opposition to gladiatorial contests in the arena or the licentious worship of Diana in the groves surrounding the effigy. He declares " . . . we wrestle not against flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." It is the spiritual wickedness in high places that is so devastating to the moral life of any city, setting an evil example and establishing evil standards for the rank and file to keep. Paul is thinking of the eternal struggle between the sinister forces of evil on the one hand and the spiritual but invisible forces on the other hand. On the one side are the mobilized forces of evil that converge upon a great city, and the mad rush for pleasure, the worship of alien ideals and religions. On the other side what have you? Faith in a man, Christ Jesus, love for your fellowmen, love for your God, purity of life, discipline, hope and prayer upon the part of a few humble men and women meeting in an obscure house for worship and fellowship. The contest certainly seems unequal, but there you have the whole burden of the Bible from beginning to end. The weak things of this world have God behind them and because of that they confound the things that are mighty and come out victorious.

In his epistle to the Romans, Paul hurls a challenge at the mobilized forces: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors (far and away the victors) through him that loved us."

III

And how are these subtle and sinister and invisible forces to be met? First, by putting on the whole armour of God. Jesus said, "Without me you can do nothing." Certainly without God we can do nothing. Without him we are beaten before we begin. Some of you are trying to run your lives in your own wisdom, in your own strength, and ingenuity and you are not making a success of it. Why don't you take God into partnership so you may be made powerful in him? I assure you that his power and his might and his spirit are available to all of you who are believers. You recall how Jesus cautioned the disciples to remain in Jerusalem until they should be endowed with power from on high and you remember how wonderfully they *were* presently empowered with the Holy Ghost. Yes, we can "do all things through Christ, who strengthens us."

And second, we can meet these antagonisms by assuming complete armour. We must equip ourselves with every possible device to match the stratagems of the devil. Let me run down the list.

The girdle of truth. Was it Herbert Spencer who said that "In the great emergencies of life there is nothing so powerful as the truth?"

The breastplate of righteousness. Thrice is he armed who hath his quarrel just; your feet are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. A barefooted soldier is greatly handicapped but the Christian soldier will make great strides when he is shod with the gospel of peace. Then there is the *shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, the sword of the spirit,* which is the word of God. Always where St. Paul speaks of this declaration that "The word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than any two edged sword piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, to the joints and marrow and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." And he winds it all up with the last essential which is *prayer.*

And third, all this equipment will be useless if the Christian soldier avoids confronting the enemy. And when you confront the enemy you are not to yield one inch. ". . . stand therefore, and having done all, to stand." There are great issues abroad today in politics, in morals and in religion. Where do you stand? Or do you allow yourself to be pushed around? Make up your mind which is the right side, hold to your convictions and say with Martin Luther: "Here I stand. I can not do otherwise; so help me God."

The Humility of Greatness

ALL the genuinely great insights into goodness and beauty and truth are closed to the conceited, the cocksure, the proud, and are open to the humble and teachable. All truly great men of discernment are characterized by their humility.

THEODORE C. SPEERS.

The Kingdom of God

By NORMAN S. REAM

Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Luke 12:32.

JESUS talked a lot about a kingdom! He called it the Kingdom of God, and in other places the Kingdom of Heaven. He compared it to a mustard seed, which is the smallest of seeds, yet when it is planted it grows and grows until it spreads out its branches in every direction. He told his disciples that this kingdom was at hand; that, indeed, some of them would not taste of death until they had entered into it. But he warned them that they must first become like children; that the kingdom would not come with observation but was from within them.

Probably his disciples didn't understand what he was talking about any more than most of us today understand it. Perhaps that is why he said to them near the end: "Fear not, little flock [don't worry about the intricacies of the kingdom, don't seek to understand everything—fear not], it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." It is not something you will earn, but something the Father will give you. But like the disciples of old we find ourselves striving to understand what he meant. And the more we strive to understand it the less we seem to understand.

'AS A LITTLE CHILD'

There is something wrong somewhere if we fail to understand the Kingdom of God when that kingdom was meant for those who should become childlike. And, no doubt, that is the precise reason why we cannot understand it—we refuse to become like little children, guileless, trusting and humble. We have been striving to understand something so simple that a little child could explain it to us. And all our striving does is to make the kingdom appear more complicated." Verily, verily, I say unto you, except as you become as a little child you shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of God." If children are the symbol of the kingdom then the kingdom must be something which children can understand.

Some men have thought that the Kingdom of Heaven (or the Kingdom of God) was a geographical location—a place where the righteous go to enjoy the life which is theirs after death. The Hebrews were quick to believe that the kingdom meant the restoration of Israel as a nation and the revelation of the Jews as the chosen people of God. Others have looked on it as a kind of utopian society which God would bring to earth at some future date. But are these things that children understand? It is very doubtful if there are many children who understand much about heaven above and hell below. And certainly not many children know what we talk about when we speak of the restoration of Israel. We can dismiss the thought of a future utopian society because children aren't much interested in what's going to happen to somebody else at some distant date. We have to search for a better and simpler answer than these.

IMAGINATION—AND THE KINGDOM

What is it about children that should make them special heirs of the kingdom? One of the qualities of children which distinguishes them as children is their imagination. They can live in a world which is of their own making and which cannot be damaged by the outside world or its influence. The Kingdom of God is in many respects analogous to this imaginative or dream world of children—the Kingdom of God begins as a state of mind. The people called Jesus a dreamer and an idealist because he saw things which they could never see. He conceived of a world where all men were brothers, where there was eternal peace and no suffering or sorrow. They could not in the wildest flights of their imagination even dream of such a world. They lived in their own world and had no time for any other. They did not have the imagination which could visualize for them a Kingdom of God.

Although the Kingdom of God is in part a state of mind, it is nevertheless a very real kingdom. The Kingdom of God has citizens as has other kingdoms. Its citizens are those who have become childlike and have accepted the gift which it is the Father's good pleasure to give them. The countries of this world have citizens and they also have persons within their jurisdiction who are not citizens but aliens. But there are no aliens within the Kingdom of God. One must become a full member, having accepted the gift and the responsibilities that go with it before one can be admitted.

But the Kingdom of God not only has citizens; it has a homeland which is the universe, a ruler who is God, and a law which is the law of love. And finally it is a kingdom which is eternal. Citizenship within it lasts forever.

A REAL KINGDOM

Yes, the Kingdom of God, though beginning as a state of mind, is very real for those who are within it. A Russian youth who had become a Christian through reading Tolstoi and the New Testament was brought before a magistrate for refusing to bear arms for his country. He told the judge of this kingdom whose law was love, and whose citizens overcame evil with good and refused the law of force and violence. "Yes," said the judge, "I understand. But you must be realistic. These laws you are talking about may be

the laws of the Kingdom of God, but that kingdom has not come yet." The young man straightened and said: "Sir, that kingdom has not come yet for you, or for Russia or for the world. But the Kingdom of God has come for me. And I cannot now live as if it had not come." You see, the kingdom, though a state of mind is as real as the kingdoms of this world—more real, for the kingdoms of this world are transitory.

One can imagine that Pilate may have seen this conflict between the Kingdom of God and the Roman empire as Christ stood before him ready to be condemned and sentenced to the cross. Perhaps he excused himself and washed his hands of the matter because for him the Roman empire was a reality and the kingdom of which Jesus spoke was only a dream. In Heywood Broun's autobiography of Pilate he pictures this ruler as looking into the face of Christ and being carried up into a high place from whence he could see the kingdoms of this world—and Rome was not one of them. Pilate made a mistake. Rome was the dream world. The Kingdom of God was the reality.

Are not we making that choice every day, you and I? Being forced to choose between a dream world and reality, we choose what we think is reality. But when we get it into our hands it filters through them and leaves them empty, proving itself to have been the dream. We search for the pearl of great price and we think that it is hidden in those material things which can make life easy and comfortable.

I have a friend who is like that. He is not a bad chap, but he would never think of going to church. For to him the church represents that which is apart from the reality of everyday life. For him the Kingdom of God is something that is way off in the distance —the pie-in-the-sky-by-and-by-when-we-die idea. Why bother with something which you can't touch with your hands and let trickle through your fingers like money? Forced to choose, like everyone of us, he chooses that which in the final analysis will prove to have been of no lasting value, and rejects that which is ultimate reality.

A WAY OF LIFE

But the Kingdom of God is more than just a state of mind; it is also a way of life. And the way of life is induced by the state of mind—by the basic ideas which have gripped one's mind. One of those ideas is that the extent of this kingdom is the universe, and that, therefore, man is at home in the universe and it is friendly to him. The kingdom is ruled by God; therefore, absolute obedience must be given to God and all other loyalties and allegiances are secondary. The law of the kingdom is love and therefore all man's relations must be based on love. This is the way of life in the kingdom.

There is not one person in a thousand who would not admit, if he were pressed for an answer, that the way of love is the most satisfactory way of dealing with one's fellowmen. But so much of the time we refuse to adopt that way and insist on letting our pride stand in the way. That is why the Christians of the early church looked upon pride as one of the worst sins. It foolishly prevents us from doing what is right.

A father and a mother broke up their home over minor differences and the father went to a far city. Both of them grieved over their foolishness and longed to be together again. But both were too proud to take the first step that would bring them together. Finally their only son, who had been living with the mother, died. Both parents had loved the son dearly. One day the father came back to the home town and walked out to the cemetery. He stood by his son's grave and thought of this foolishness which had kept him from happiness for so many years. As he stood there he heard footsteps behind him and upon turning he saw his wife. And there over their son's grave they were reconciled and found once more a measure of happiness. But it took the death of their son to bring them to it. The way of love could have prevented them from ever parting, had it not been for their pride.

The Kingdom of God is a way of life—a way of love which brings peace and happiness and joy. And it is the Father's good pleasure to give us this way of life. All we have to do is to accept. But to accept is to put away pride—and how difficult that is!

A KINGDOM WITH POWER

But the Kingdom of God is at least one thing more than a state of mind and a way of life. Speaking to the people one day, Jesus said: "There be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power." The Kingdom of God is power! And it is this power which enables the citizens of the kingdom to put away pride. After the resurrection Jesus instructed his disciples to tarry in Jerusalem until they should be imbued with power from on high. And after Pentecost, after that day in the upper room when they witnessed the risen Christ, they received such power as they had never dreamed of. It was power which in fact enabled them to change the world, to alter the whole course of history. It was personal power which enabled them to face suffering and death, and it was corporate power which made them, banded together as a church, the most decisive institution in history.

Who would have thought in the year 50 A.D. that this small band of common men, ignorant men, fishermen, carpenters and the like, would ever be responsible for a movement which would spread into every country in the world, would transform society, and would have such an influence that its leader would by his life divide history into two parts? The Kingdom of God is power indeed! It is witnessed in the church today. During the last depression thousands of banks across the country were forced to close. How many churches closed? The Rock of Ages was stronger than the rock of money and finance.

"The kingdom of God is within you," said Jesus. And it is not a kingdom that comes with observation so that one may say "Here it is," or "There it is." It comes within the hearts and souls of men as a state of mind, then as a way of life, and finally as a great

power. It is the pearl of great price for which men ought to sacrifice all else in order to attain.

CHEAP IMITATIONS OF THE KINGDOM

In Maupassant's famous tale, "The Necklace," he tells of a woman who with her husband was of very humble means. But one day they were invited to a great government reception. The woman had nothing to wear, however, and so the husband spent his last money on a beautiful new gown. After she put the gown on she decided that she would have to have a necklace to go with it, and as they had no money left she managed to borrow one from a friend. They had a wonderful time at the ball and the lady looked beautiful, but when they got home she discovered that the necklace was missing. Hurriedly they retraced the path to the ballroom but could not find the necklace. They were desperate and of course could not sleep that night. The next day they went to town and searched for a new necklace, finally finding one that looked just like the one that was lost. It cost 30,000 francs. The husband had recently received an inheritance. He sold it. They borrowed sums of money from all their friends and finally managed to buy the necklace and returned it to the woman from whom the original necklace had been borrowed. Then for many years they both had to work and sweat in order to earn enough money to pay back the loans which they had made. Some years later the woman met her friend from whom she had borrowed the necklace and told her what had happened. Her friend was shocked and said: "Why, my necklace was only paste—worth at the most 500 francs."

That woman and her husband had spent their lives paying for a cheap imitation of a diamond necklace. They had grieved and toiled and suffered over it—over a substitute for the real thing. There are people who do that every day. They sweat and toil and suffer in order to gain a life which is a cheap imitation of real life, for which one does not strive but which it is the Father's good pleasure to give us if we will accept. "Fear not, little flock, it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

The Coming of Day

By PORTER FRENCH

Evening came, and morning, the first day. Genesis 1:5

THE evening and the morning are the best times of the day. During the hours when the sun is high the shadows are sharp across the path; objects on the landscape stand out bold and clear and hard. The pressure of the labor at hand is upon us. We cannot pause sufficiently to reflect or rest, to dream or imagine. But in the evening, though the shadows are longer, they are more friendly. The shocks of corn glow golden in the field. The tree is outlined clear against the sky. The gathering darkness outlines the glow of a friendly light in the window of home and the pressure of the day gives place to the thought of some work accomplished, something achieved.

Likewise the morning is a *best* time. Even though the skies may be overcast with wintry clouds, the sun is apt to break through at the horizon with the golden promise of the coming day. We look forward to what we may accomplish in the hours that are ahead. Yesterday may have been strenuous, or it may have been a disappointment, but here is a new day, a new opportunity and, perhaps, a new approach to an old problem. As the new day has come, perhaps even we are made new, through the benediction of the rest and healing that the night has brought.

"Evening came, and morning." How profound is the insight of these words into the nature of creation! The Scripture account here centers in the emergence of intelligence, purpose, meaning and beauty from a world that was chaos, conflict, discord and death. But notice that the moment creation appears, there are also limits. The firmament divides the waters above from the waters beneath. The seas are divided in order that the dry land may appear. The moment that the light appears, there is a division between the light and the darkness. Evening came, and morning. Creativity means the setting of limits. Creation means a beginning, but there can be no beginning of one thing without the ending of that which was in its place. There cannot be the emergence of beauty apart from the acceptance of the divisions and limits which God has imposed. The day cannot dawn, except as it brings with it the limiting shadows of evening. The evening and the morning are not opposites, but the fulfillment of the limitations within which we may live as children of God and heirs of his creation.

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD

Evening and morning: they speak to us of the never failing providence of God. Probably there is nothing in your life of which you are more certain than that the sun will rise tomorrow. Morning, you know, will come. It happened before you came into the world—it will continue when you are gone. But there is nothing in the rising and setting of the sun to guarantee that it will or should continue to do so. We believe that it will because it always has, but to say that it always will is purely an act of faith. He who says he has no religious faith but places his trust in the law of cause and effect

is himself making a profession of religious faith, for all science rests on the foundation of a dependable and understandable universe.

This, however, is only the threshold of what we consider to be an adequate understanding of the universe. You aren't going to be saved by the knowledge that water always boils at 212 degrees at sea level. What you want to know is, what does this created world care about *me?* It takes eight thousand years for light from the milky way to travel to our earth and the milky way is only in our front yard. Perhaps we can be persuaded that the universe will behave itself—but is it too big to care?

The limitations of a created world help us at this point and save us from being alone. You and I certainly are a part of this world and if it is dependable, surely that which we have felt and known is dependable. There too, we have found limits, and at those very limits we have found the knowledge of God's providence and love. For we do not discover that our universe is friendly until we reach its limitations. When the evening comes, and limits are apparent—when a period of work must cease or when a relationship comes to a conclusion—then the firmament appears in the heavens, the dry land appears and light defines the shadows of darkness. Evening and morning, beginning and ending, are a part of the providence of God.

MOVEMENT MEANS ACTIVITY

The evening and the morning speak to us of the movement of creation. The motion of the world we live in carries no meaning. Activity does not mean progress. But movement does mean activity with a goal. The moment creation came into being there also appeared an ultimate goal. Notice the movement in the creation story: the very words *the evening and the morning were the first day* imply that there will be other days to follow. And each of them will begin and close on a higher level of creation than the day that preceded it.

In this movement toward a goal is the meaning of God's creative purpose and will. Though it does not mean that each day in time will be better than the last, it does mean that life is always moving toward a goal. How fully we share and work with God in moving toward the fullest goal of his creativity depends on our willingness to be led by him and his providential love.

Here again the limits of creativity come to our rescue and save us from destroying ourselves. We can rebel against God for a day, or a season, or for a thousand years, but in the end the evening comes and our day is done. We can build a world which is not in accord with God's will only up to a certain point, then disintegration will set in at the center. A depression comes, a Hitler rises, we have a war. We come squarely up against what the prophets referred to as "the day of the Lord."

Edward R. Murrow, speaking in a short wave broadcast from London on the day in September, 1939, when the nazi panzer divisions were invading Poland said: "Europe as we have known it is disappearing." Paul Hutchinson, editor of the Christian Century, making the first round the world trip of any journalist after the war, wrote: "Europe is dead." This was a strong statement but a true one. Europe as we have known it *is* dead. A new world is striving to come into being. What that world will be like will depend on the little remnant of Christians who, like the monks of the middle ages, keep the light still shining in the darkness.

At the same time our behaviour in this country—in the midst of our strength and prosperity—shows us that we are not well, for we are members of the same body. But disease is always a sign of hope. Illness is a sign that we have reached the limits which manifest God's power to heal and save. Think back over your own life and spiritual experience. Recall if that which was your deliverance did not appear to you to be the threat of extinction. Healing so often does look threatening because it brings us to a limit—and an end. But the evening and the morning go together for creation moves, reaches limits and these lead us to the discovery of new and waiting worlds.

MAN'S STRUGGLE WITH GOD

See how the morning and the evening play a part in the great drama of man's struggle with God—and for God. No sooner do we have the story of man's creation in God's image than we read how Cain slew Abel. Chapter after chapter of the Chronicles begins with the comment: "He did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord." The golden calf of irresponsibility was far more congenial than the revealed law of God. Therefore the prophets' "thus saith the lord," brought them expulsion and death. Yet it was the very rebellion of man against God that placed him in greater servitude to the Creator and thus brought about a fulfillment of his purpose. Paul, who rebelled most vigorously salutes the Philippians with the words: "Paul and Timothy, *slaves* of Christ Jesus."

Somehow we are always unprepared for God's fulfillment. Was not Christ born in a night in which only watchers from a far country saw his star?

> Whither shall I go from thy Spirit?
> . . . If I say surely the darkness cover me;
> Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee.
> But the night shineth as the day,
> The darkness and the light are both alike to thee.

The creation of God comes to us not in the steadily advancing brightness, but in the evening and the morning of limitation, movement, providence and deliverance. Our acceptance of these is our opening of the way for God to bring about in us his creation.

We Must Choose

THE worldwide attack on civilization is driving us to choose between a worse evil and a greater good than mankind has ever known before. We must be visionary and utopian if we are not to be unprecedentedly base; in order to be realistic we must be loftily idealistic.

RALPH BARTON PERRY.

How to Love Your Enemies

By WILLIAM CLYDE HOWARD

Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you. Matthew 5:44

HATRED is one of the ugliest of sins. It can produce a poison within the body which does unlimited harm to the physical well-being. It can dwarf a person mentally until the very earth seems intermingled with the tones its vindictiveness promotes.

If you want to unseat a person either mentally, physically or spiritually, get him to hate you. It will produce marked results in a short period of time. Seeking a slogan for their rise to power, the nazi party in Germany found one in "Death to the Jews." They played on that one string until at least 6,000,000 Jews paid with their lives for Hitler's folly in Europe. And what did it do to the Germans? The self-imposed leaders became shocking in their treatment of their alleged enemy until they reached a new low in human bestiality. The nazis manufactured a hatred, created an artificial enemy and proceeded to rise on the dead bodies of its victims. Then in the end that which had been a slogan became a menace to the health and happiness of the world.

But in the text, Jesus was speaking primarily of the individual. He had just been speaking of the condition of men in his Beatitudes which are comparable to nothing else in the world. In them he assembles the virtues of man. Then, as if he wanted to bring his sayings to a practical climax, he said: "If ye love them that love you, what reward have you? Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you and pray for them that despitefully use you."

On no other basis than this can we become children of God. Yet this imposes upon us one of life's most difficult tasks. Let us see what it entails.

BLESS THEM THAT CURSE YOU

We ought to remember that it is not necessary actually to use blasphemous words to curse. The Christian faith has many enemies. Some of them are venemous in their hatred but the majority show their attitude in quiet insolence. And when the deluge comes these same people call first on the faith of the Christian church to save them from the vials of wrath poured on them by an uncharitable world. In the wild extravagance of prosperity some people become independent of spiritual power, superior to the friendship of the church and neglectful of God. This attitude is the equivalent of a curse. Yet in so many incidents have such persons been inflated by the whimsies of the world, stripped of possessions or brought low with devastating illness. Then in the quiet of the long hours, when fair weather friends have deserted them, when all seems to be lost, they have time to hear the still small voice which prosperity hindered them from hearing before.

God is still there, only waiting for the unfortunate one to call on him—for God is blessing him who has cursed him.

You can see how this will work in our own lives. Perhaps a member of the family has forsaken its love and considers himself superior to father or mother, brothers and sisters. Some individuals, warm friends in adversity, lose their enthusiasm for their friendship when prosperity raises them to higher social levels. They no longer claim even an acquaintanceship but in the day of trouble such a one will turn to old friends and old associates. Then bless such a one, for unless you can find the attitude of spiritual peace, an attitude which rises above earthborne values, you cannot claim the Kingdom of God.

DO GOOD TO THEM THAT HATE YOU

Now we come to the really difficult part of this injunction. It seems almost incredible but it is required that we do good to them that hate us—to those who go out of their way to do us harm, who are vindictive, who laugh at our discomfiture, who seemingly are never so happy as when they have done an evil thing against us.

Here is where the philosophy of Jesus begins to work. Never lose an opportunity to do a good turn for such a person. Go out of your way, walk the second mile, turn the other cheek, do anything—not that your enemy may cease to hate you but that you may save yourself from his hating. His hating is so full of dire results that it is worth any activity you can expend to soften his repugnance and redeem him from destroying his own soul.

A great soldier once said: "Always take the high ground and the enemy will flee." This is a good text to use in overcoming our enemies for they must be above us if they are to shoot the arrows of hatred at us.

An astute enemy does not let you know that he hates you. He may even be friendly to your face while ready to stab you in the back when you turn. Or he may be content only to betray you with silence. He will not speak against you but he will do nothing to defend you. He, by his silence, acquiesces in a slander of which you may know nothing.

There is little one can do against such an enemy, but this one thing we all can do. We can do good to all with whom we come in contact.

> Count that day lost, whose low descending sun,
> Views from thy hand, no worthy action done.

You can verify your own soul by loving all people and harming none. Do good to *all,* friend and enemy alike, and your own souls will prosper and grow healthy and beautiful.

The question: "Who is my neighbor?" has been asked in every tongue of man. In the fierce days of a retributive past the formula was: "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." Every glare of hatred was met with a counter-glare. If an enemy shouted at one, one could shout back.

But Jesus changed all this and this was his reasoning: "Let the discord of another die into silence and reply by smiting with the cords of love." Which is better, after all, two thunder clouds shattering each other, or the pale clear light of the moon as it shines with its quiet glow? The formula of Jesus works. Therefore, we are enjoined against our natural inclination to pay back in the enemy's coin, fighting fire with fire. Then there will be no stirring of malice within our hearts, nothing but kindly motives and emotions which will paralyze the evil intentions of men and cause them to marvel at a demonstration of power on a higher level than they can conceive.

PRAY FOR YOUR ENEMIES

How tragic that people who employ the same means of grace can be found seeking revenge or shouting hatred against a brother. How tragic to see denominations vying with one another for supremacy. Or one individual, bloated with this world's goods, emulating the potentate and enslaving his brothers under the goad of his own ambition.

We have been talking about enemies but what is to prevent us from being an enemy? That is why Jesus insisted that we pray for *our* enemies—to make sure that the fires of hatred were not in *us.* For when, regardless of our feeling for a person, we have begun to pray for him, the fires within gradually die down, our tempers become pliant and we courageously meet his curses with blessings—his evils with good.

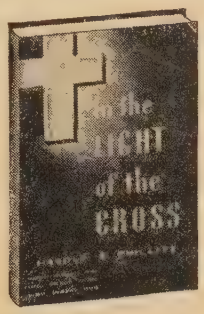
I do not speak lightly of the difficulty involved in praying for those who despitefully use us. It is one of the hardest things we have to do. But consider what would be the effect if we were to take deliberately this powerful injunction seriously and apply it continuously. Society would be revolutionized and the fellowship among men would be a foretaste of heaven.

The fires of hatred between management and labor would die out if labor leaders would cease calling employers "fascists," and if management would no longer brand all labor unions as communist. Consider what any community would become if enmity were always met by love alone. For if the hater found no answering hate he would in time be forced to answer love with love.

Jesus believed this to be a practical way in a very practical world. He never for a moment permitted himself to deviate from this course. Himself the epitome of love, he is an unanswerable example of what it is possible for men to attain. So many times he said, in principle, "God is your pattern. If you love him

FOR
Lenten-Easter
PREACHING

In The Light of The Cross



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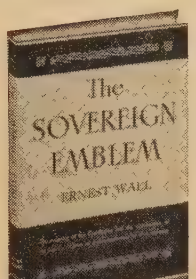

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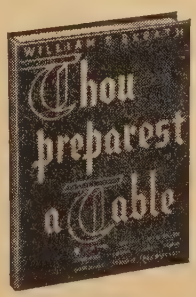

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you will try to copy his ways and be made like him through his love."

Thus the Christian ethic becomes more than a morality. It reaches up until it becomes religion—the love of the only wise God, our Father. "Here is a planet," says Dr. McLaren, "and there is a dew drop. Under a microscope you will discover that it likewise is spinning in space and that the only difference between the gigantic planet and the dew drop is size." In comparison to God we are as the dew drop. Made in his image, if men are evil it is not because God would not fill them with good but because they themselves have filled their lives with bad.

As we compare our lives with the life of Jesus, we begin to see the reason for his power. He was steadfast, compassionate, loving and true. The unchangeable pattern which, because of his high degree of spiritual vitality made it seemingly difficult for his followers was the emphasis he placed on *love.*

There are many things we do not understand about him but this one thing we can do without understanding. We can follow him as the dew drop follows the planet in its motion. There can never be a mistake in our direction so long as we adhere to his course. We can obey him and we can heed his advice which never yet has caused a person to go wrong.

THE FINAL INJUNCTION

"Love your enemies. Bless them that curse you. Do good to them that hate you. Pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you." That sums it all up, I think, and if you were to take these injunctions seriously the world would make a beaten path to your door.

That means no prejudice for anyone, no hatred within, no vindictiveness, no thoughts of revenge, no sultry temper which explodes in wrath upon the head of your victim. It means placidity, calmness, serenity and peace.

These are the rewards of such a course and in the beauty of such a life happiness and good will come as a matter of course.

Christ of the Andes

A sermon for children by Edwin D. Miner

WE do not know enough about the countries that lie to the south of our own United States. The people there are Americans too; we are North Americans and they are South Americans. I want to tell you today about two of those countries and what happened to them.

Argentina and Chile are the names of these two countries. Unfortunately, the leaders of these nations were quarreling about where their lands ended. Each one was claiming land which the other said belonged to him. It was all mountainous and had never been properly explored, and people just did not know where one country ended and the other began. But the leaders argued, and finally they got ready to fight about it. It was too bad that they were getting ready to go to war, for the land argued about was not worth the lives of those who would be killed in the battles.

GUNS INSTEAD OF PLOWS

Armies were trained in both countries. Factories began turning out guns and cannon and bullets instead of farm tools. Closer and closer the two countries came to war. Then something happened. It was an Easter Sunday morning, and the people were crowding into the churches to worship Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace.

The Bishop of Argentina had worried and prayed for a long time over these preparations for war. When he saw the crowds filling the church for Easter service, he decided to try to do something about it. So he looked down at the people and began to preach. He told them how useless it was to fight; how Jesus gave his life for all people, the people of Chile as well as those of Argentina. And what did war do? It never settled any problems. All it did was to show which side had the strongest army or the biggest guns. It did not arrive at the truth. So he told the people not to fight.

The Bishop of Chile was telling his people the same thing that Sunday morning. People of both lands began to repeat what their bishops had told them. What good was war? It never settled anything except which side was the stronger. If two boys fight, one of them will win, but that does not mean that the winner is right. Finally the rulers of the two countries heard what the man on the street was saying, and they also heard from the ministers. So they decided to talk about their problem instead of fighting about it.

The king of England was brought in to consider the problem and to act as judge. What he said was accepted and the two nations did not fight to find out the boundaries of their countries.

Meanwhile, both sides had more cannon and guns than they needed and they did not know what to do with them. Upon the advice of the two bishops, it was decided to melt the metal of the cannon into a huge statue of Christ. And it was to be placed on the highest mountain top, which was just on the border, half in Chile and half in Argentina. This was done. Today, if you travel to the borders between those two American countries, you can see this great statue of the Prince of Peace. Let us learn to settle our arguments without fighting as we remember Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

No Continuing City

(Continued from page 29)

as to anyone else. If there is a measure of judgment in the situation which confronts the Christian church throughout the world today, if there is anything which we are meant to learn from the increasing power of communism, is it not this—that in recent years, both in China and in the lands from which we come, our Christian witness has been offered in too costless and comfortable a fashion? We have wanted to bring men to know Christ, but we have become so attached to our position as members of a highly privileged class and people that we have not been prepared to make the sacrifices necessary to incarnate our gospel and make ourselves one with those whom we would win. We have not shared their sufferings and taken upon our shoulders their burdens. We have spoken of the love of God, but we have not made it real with our lives. We have kept ourselves detached and aloof, trying to practice an easy kind of Christianity without a cross at its heart, and the result is that between us and the underprivileged children of God there is a great gulf fixed—a gulf which all our little acts of self denial are utterly inadequate to bridge. I cannot escape the conclusion that, if our Christian witness is to be effective in the shaping of the new world order which is coming to birth, if it is going to be heeded by men, we shall have to find some way of giving flesh to our Gospel, of identifying ourselves economically with those whom we would bring to Christ; a way of identification which is likely to be far more costly than any of us have even dreamed, but without which we shall accomplish nothing and know no lasting peace of mind.

BOUND BY LOVE ONLY

In the third place, and this is in large measure assumed in what has just been said, the citizen of the new Jerusalem belongs to a city whose bounds are maintained and extended not by force but by the slow way of self giving friendship and love. There are going to be times in the future when our patience will be sorely tried, when we are going to be tempted to

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take short cuts to achieve our ends: but there are no easy short cuts by which men can be brought to the gates of the city of God. Buried in the Crimea is a young Englishman, John Howard, who many years ago was noted for his readiness to be of service to all who came his way. On his tomb words to this effect were carved in Latin and Russian:

> "Stranger, whosoever thou art, thou art standing at the tomb of a man who was thy friend."

It is a good epitaph for a faithful citizen of the new Jerusalem. God grant that it may be ours!

A SENSE OF PERSPECTIVE

Finally, whatever happens in this world, the citizen of the new Jerusalem remains calm, confident, and unmoved. As we have so often learned in recent years, those who have no loyalty beyond that to their earthly city soon lose all sense of perspective. To them earthly victory means the final accomplishment of their purposes, earthly defeat the end of all their hopes. Sharing with them an earthly citizenship, in so far as lies within his power the citizen of the city of God rejoices with them in their victories and mourns with them in defeat. Yet he can never forget that the only ultimate and unchanging power in the world is the love of God as made known in Jesus Christ. He knows that, whatever may be the fate of the cities of this world, the providential purpose of God continues to work itself out among the children of men. In a country church in England you will find a tablet with the following inscription—

> "In the year 1653, when all things sacred were throughout the nation either demolished or profaned, Sir Robert Shirley founded this church: whose singular praise it is to have done the best things in the worst times and to have hoped them in the most calamitous."

I commend these words to you as a striking thought for the difficult days which lie before us, concise marching orders for a soldier of the city of God: "to do the best things in the worst times and hope them in the most calamitous."

A few months before the outbreak of the second World War, a traveller in Yugoslavia paid a visit upon Bishop Nikolai of the Greek Orthodox Church. The clouds hung darkly over Europe, war seemed inevitable, but the bishop was remarkably calm and unperturbed. Among other words of Christian wisdom and hope, he said this: "Christians know that the sun cannot for ever be hidden behind the clouds: and the sun is always there!" Let that be our strength as we go out from this house of God to face a strange and unknown future!

Let me close with a quotation from the Amsterdam message. "It is not in man's power to banish sin and death from the earth, to create the unity of the Holy Catholic Church, to conquer the hosts of Satan. But it is within the power of God. He has given us at Easter the certainty that His purpose will be accomplished. But by our acts of obedience and faith we can on earth set up signs which point to the coming victory. Till the day of that victory our lives are hid with Christ in God, and no earthly disillusion or distress or power of hell can separate us from Him. As those who wait in confidence and joy for their deliverance, let us give ourselves to those tasks which lie to our hands, and so set up signs that men may see."

The Faith of Christ's Freemen

By Thomas Curtis Clark

Our Faith is not in dead saints' bones,
In altars of vain sacrifice;
Nor is it in the stately stones
That rise in beauty toward the skies.

Our faith is in the Christ who walks
With men today, in street and mart;
The constant Friend who thinks and talks
With those who seek him with the heart.

We would not spurn the ancient lore,
The prophet's word or psalmist's prayer;
But lo! our Leader goes before,
Tomorrow's battles to prepare.

His gospel calls for living men
With singing blood and minds alert;
Strong men, who fall to rise again,
Who strive and bleed, with courage girt.

We serve no God whose work is done,
Who rests within his firmament:
Our God, his labors but begun,
Toils evermore, with power unspent.

God was and is and e'er shall be;
Christ lived and loved—and loves us still;
And man goes forward, proud and free,
God's present purpose to fulfill.

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Ten Rules for Worship

I

Worship begins as I close the door to my home. On my way I pray for my church, for the minister, and for those who worship far and near . . . .

II

Before I enter the house of God I pause a moment and leave outside all things and thoughts unbecoming to the heavenly father; hates, grudges, frettings, worldly cares and sinful thoughts . . . .

III

The moment I enter the door of this divine house I cease all idle conversation. I come in silence, for great things rise out of quietness and minister to me and those about me . . .

IV

As soon as I am seated I bow my head in prayer. I pray for others as well as myself. I pray for my church and its great causes. I ask God to be near me now . . . .

V

I join in the singing of hymns and bow my head during the amen. I think about the words of the music and let their meaning and spirit go down to the roots of my soul . . . .

VI

As I lay my offering on the plate I say a prayer of thanks for my money and ask God's blessing on its use here and in the uttermost parts of the earth . . . .

VII

Throughout the service I think of God objectively. As power, peace, strength, love, He is all I need for life as it ought to be . . . .

VIII

I listen as my minister preaches from God's word and seek to apply His message to my life. I pray for Him as he preaches . . . .

IX

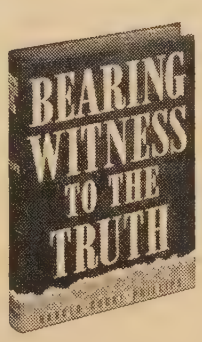
When the service has ended, in Christian friendliness I speak to those I know and those who are strangers to me . . . .

X

As I exit through the outer portals I dedicate my life to walk this week the high road with Christ . . . .

Charlie W. Shedd,
First Presbyterian Church,
Ponca City, Oklahoma

Bearing Witness to the TRUTH



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The Preacher's Friends

By EDWIN E. AUBREY

FRIENDS the minister will inevitably have, some waiting for him in the parish, some winning him by kindness and confidence, some thrust upon him. It may be that he will have too many so that, like Browning's "last duchess," "all and each will draw from *him* alike the approving speech." For most churches expect that the minister will be on equally good terms with all members. There is, in this, the danger of the standard smile, the indiscriminate word, the miscellaneous "pat."

● *Three Kinds of Friends*

The one hundred forty-first Psalm, which well may be used as a preachers' prayer, speaks of three kinds of friends. The first of these are the dangerous friends who will invite you to "eat of their dainties," who would disarm your criticism with their personal kindness. Subtly—so subtly that you may fall into their trap unaware—they will coax you into "taking part in deeds of wickedness with men who do wrong." This you may do by passive, just as much as by active collusion. Their sins drop out of your list in Sunday morning sermons. You may heal the gulf with a game of golf and become part of their coterie.

I know that you must raise your budget for the church, but "he who pays the piper calls the tune" even in churches. There is a less cynical rationalization that may come right out of Christian ethics: we must love the sinner while we hate his sin. But let us keep the distinction clear. Unless we keep our conscience straight all is lost. No wonder the psalmist cried, "Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth, keep watch at the door of my lips. Incline not my heart to any evil thing."

● *The Dangers of Eloquence*

Out of the lore of the Jewish Zaddikim comes the story of the rabbi who was entertaining at the Sabbath meal a learned friend who said to him, "Let us now hear you talk of your doctrine; you speak so beautifully!" "May I be struck dumb ere I speak beautifully!" was the reply of the rabbi who said nothing more. This little story betrays one of the most subtle temptations to which the preacher is exposed. Eloquence may obscure judgment, and if eloquence be praised judgment may be suppressed.

At other times we are caught in the sense of the complexity of moral issues, and the fatherly deacon may say: "Young man, this is a complicated problem and you did well not to deal in specifics." We may then flatter ourselves on being sane when we are really only playing safe. William Blake put it well when he said: "If the lion was advised by the fox, he would be cunning." Courage can be dissipated by circumspection.

The book of Proverbs, which devotes a great deal of attention to friendship, remarks sarcastically that "the rich man hath many friends;" but he says in another place: "He that loveth pureness of heart, for the grace of his lips will the king be his friend." *There* is the real way to earn friendship.

The first admonition of the psalm is, then, to avoid false friends. The false prophets of the Old Testament always tried to stay in the favor of the powerful and the most generous interpretation that we can put on their action, or lack of it, is that they were blind because they were too intimately involved in the policies of mistaken rulers. The true prophets, on the other hand, kept their spiritual reserve, often at the cost of immediate popularity. I wonder if a preacher has any right to be popular in an evil world.

EDWIN E. AUBREY

The second group of friends referred to in the 141st Psalm is made up of the righteous. "If the righteous smite me, it is a favor, if he reprove me it is the oil of blessing. Let not my head refuse it." Welcome, then, the critical friend. This is not easy. When a preacher has worked hard hewing out a sermon and then polishing it, what is more natural than to resent the critical comments of a hearer? When a minister has labored for months, perhaps for years, to strengthen some phase of his church program, how unwelcome is the reminder that he has neglected another part of the work!

How hollow then sounds the phrase "friendly criticism"! Friendly, indeed! And yet it may be, as the psalmist says, "the oil of blessing." Let us then also pray with him, "Let not my head refuse it." Love may be, as George W. Curtis said, "the coldest of critics." For love seeks to help the other to become his best self; and often this requires dissatisfaction or censure. Nothing is more dangerous for any man than a doting wife. I remember a professor who had one, and the way she built up his egotism was something terrible to behold. One of the blessings of a large family is that it can multiply the angles from which criticism comes.

● *Be Glad for the Critical Friend*

Thomas Carlyle once said rather tartly that if anyone could be "killed off by one critique," the sooner he is dispatched the better. The truth-teller is a dependable friend. "Faithful are the wounds of a friend," says the ancient teller of proverbs. Painful too? Yes, but with the marks of genuine love!

For our friends are tested by the penetration of their familiar and privileged questions and judgments. If you are lucky you will have at least one layman in your church who will speak to you the unpleasant truths you need to hear. The wounds he deals you may be from a scalpel that cuts the undetected lump that might have become a cancer in your spiritual life. The slap may leave an ugly momentary welt but it will serve to check your hysteria.

The friendship of integrity has no equal. It gives you back a faithful image of yourself. "The best mirror is an old friend," said George Herbert, presumably implying that an old friend lasts precisely because of this sincerity. Such friendship points beyond itself to a higher loyalty shared by both friends. This may be love of country, faithfulness to a great ideal or common reliance on the same principles or facts accepted as fundamental. A faithful friend shares a common faith.

Creative friendship thrives on mutual criticism as well as mutual trust; and reproof is thus a service of love. Note that the psalmist does not welcome any and all reproof. He is no masochist, enjoying punishment for its own sake. It is the reprimand of the *righteous* that he accounts a blessing. For the righteous is understood

in the Old Testament as one who loves and seeks to follow the way of the Lord. The righteous critic is thus a divine agency for redemption of the minister.

It is not surprising that the psalmist appeals next to God himself: "Mine eyes are toward thee, O Lord God. In thee I seek refuge; leave me not defenseless." Here is a third kind of friendship which the minister can enjoy. God is his friend and guardian. God is the guardian of the man's lips that he may speak truly and sincerely, the guardian of his affections that he may always know his first and commanding love. God is the guardian of the man's feet that they may pass by the traps set by wicked men.

God is the root and flower of man's life. "In him we live and move and have our being." Because our lives are drawn from him we cannot live apart from him. Apart from him our lives have little meaning. The prophets were "friends of God" long before the medieval mystics gathered around Tauler and Suso took the name.

In Jesus this friendship was so deep and so intense that neither God nor Christ seemed complete without the other. In an essay where his deep feeling for once breaks through his cleverness of style, Montaigne says, "In the friendship I speak of, friends intermingle and combine themselves in each other with so general a unity that they erase and can no longer find the seam that joined them together." What better description could we find of the relation between Jesus and God?

● *The Friendship of Man and God*

Such is the friendship between man and God of which the Bible speaks, and theology can only speculate about the mystery of such a union when it seeks to explain either Christology or prayer. It is not confined to the Bible, either, for Christian history is replete with names of people great and small who have testified to the experience of this intimate friendship with God.

But what of you and me? Can we too find reassurance and correction and sustaining power in a friendship with God? Can we too hope for its strength in the midst of hard work and frustration and temptation? If we cannot there is little that we have to preach, or to give in pastoral work, or turn to as the joy of the church's task. For the ministry is really the business of introducing friends to each other, bringing God and men together in mutual recognition.

This is the central point of our life as ministers. It is a possibility for us if we do not expect too much or pretend too much. Every friend knows how elusive is the real nature of the one he loves. And every one of us knows that he is loved by others in many ways he cannot understand. Our knowledge of friendship is an awareness of our ignorance, and a knowledge by inference.

This is the tragic sense of life: that the more we love the more we become aware of the limitations of our knowledge of the one we love. Self revelation is never complete on either side. Why then should we expect it to be different in our friendship with God? Why should we agonize so because we cannot be absolutely sure?

The answer is found not in detached logical argument but in the great venture. How can we *prove* that sincerity is an ultimate good? How can we *demonstrate* that truth is the foundation of life? How can we *justify* the giving of ourselves in love by any reasoning? These are presuppositions for our thinking and our acting. And yet we dare to act upon them. And when we do so act, the conviction grows that our action is not amiss, but that somehow it is right. Nor is this merely a conviction, for into our lives there comes at those times a peace and power that we cannot explain.

● *Read Your Bibles*

Perhaps this is an escape from clear thinking to undefined verbiage but that is the uncertainty with which we must live. We can then choose between the clear alternatives: God or no God; but either choice is made in faith. So must we take our human friends,—in faith. When we cannot understand, still their friendship sustains us and improves us.

So read your Bible again and again and again. Go back to it. Capture its moods of exaltation and frustration, of despair and of hope. Then sally forth to the work before you. Give it your best: your courage, your imagination, your honesty, your confidence in whatsoever good you see. God will come closer then.

The psalm concludes with the all too familiar prayer that the innocent may be protected and the wicked punished. In the present context, however, the references to the snares of the wicked have a special relevance to our theme.

We have noted how the very friendship of evil men is a trap. Sometimes the trap is quite visible but the bait is too tempting, as when the pastor is invited by a socialite in his church to a cocktail party of the four hundred. What a distinction to be seen in such company—and what an embarrassment to any sermon on the hard-drinking American! Sometimes it is a snare into which unwarily we wander and then our efforts to extricate ourselves only tighten the noose. A clever publicity officer of some movement may persuade us to join it for the sake of the Christian cause. Perhaps we are invited to sign a petition against the use of radio facilities to attack religion, and before we know it we have abrogated freedom of speech. How can we escape the deadly consequences of our decision, except by seeming to *approve* attacks on religion? And then what shall we say to the members of our church?

Sometimes it is a pit cleverly concealed under what looks like solid earth? In Germany during the short-lived Weimar Republic, Lutheran bishops were persuaded to oppose the proposed democratic constitution on the ground that it involved too great a centralization of the state church and threatened the provincial bishops' prerogatives. As a result the constitution failed, nazism filled the vacuum and the Lutheran churches found themselves in the deep pit of nazi oppression.

● *Wise Men Are Helpful*

This is where wise and just men can be valuable friends to the preacher. The experienced public servant who has integrity can explain the implications of a contemplated ministerial action in the realm of local politics. The social worker who sees beyond charity to human rehabilitation can warn the pastor against exploitation of a fellowship fund by unscrupulous panhandlers. The Christian laboring man can tell the minister much about labor organizations and about the devices of industrial piracy. Let the preacher choose his friends and counsellors well.

"May the wicked fall into their own pits while I indeed pass by." This sounds like a plea for poetic justice, and yet there is an unpleasant note in it. Those who would entrap him are caught in their own deceits, but he passes to the side safely. Was there not a task for him: to rescue the wicked from the consequences of their own folly? Here the prophet must turn pastor. This seldom happens in the Old Testament. Jeremiah staying with his people despite their refusal to heed his prophetic preaching is the one instance I can recall.

Here love passes beyond justice into redemptive care. And the Christian minister must be always ready to forgive and restore the very men who sought to defeat him. Anything less would be unworthy of his calling, acute though the temptation be. For the unforgiving "I told you so; now stew in your own juice," is itself a temptation and a snare. To pass judgment on our fellowmen is itself a grave temptation of the cloth.

To the preacher who can rise above this temptation and yet avoid the perils that beset naïveté there opens up a great vista of prospective usefulness. The test will come when men need guidance through the maze of moral problems which they tread in the

twilight of a dwindling Christian faith. They will then turn to the minister as a man of integrity who has not compromised by unwise friendships.

A wonderful story is told of Frederick D. Maurice, the great Anglican social thinker of the last century. Five Cambridge men were discussing the task one had just had of attending a condemned criminal in his last hours. They talked of how dreadful it would be to have to spend one's last hours with some persons. "The conversation then turned," says Alec Vidler in recounting the story, "on the choice each man would make, in the last hours of his life, of a companion to accompany him to its utmost verge, and it was agreed that each should write down the name of the person he would choose. The five papers, when opened, were found to contain a single name—that of Frederick Denison Maurice."

Make that a challenge for your own life work. Choose your friends with care and men will seek you for their friends when the footsteps of other men recede into the darkness.

Sermon Illustrations

Contributed by Readers of The Pulpit

The Mountain Is There

THERE is a hill somewhere in northern India to which tourists are taken to catch a glimpse, if possible, of the Himalayas. Mt. Everest can be seen at sunrise possibly three or four times a year. The average tourist could easily say, "Mt. Everest is not there." But those who arise at dawn on cloudless days know differently. At those rare times of clearness they have seen the mountain. They know it is there. It is the same with God and religion. The truth is discovered at those times when we are able to pierce the mists of habit and selfishness and quiet the storms of restless activity and fruitless worry. We know in the brief silence of an hour of worship or in a moment of brief inspiration while the shells are screaming overhead, that God is *real* and is really there.—*Edward C. Dahl, Centre Congregational Church, Brattleboro, Vt.*

That Which I Know

This occurred before the death of my great-uncle. The old man, weakened in mind and body had sunk so low that he did not even recognize his son and two of his nephews who stood by his bed. To each of them, in turn, he said: "I don't know you." Then in the painful silence that followed, the sick man raised himself and looked earnestly at the group before him. "Do you men know the Lord Jesus Christ?" he asked. "I know *him.*"—*C. W. Zurbrigg of Jarvie, Alberta.*

The Goal Gives Meaning

Early in my ministry the church I served was engaged in a great building enterprise. Men came and dug a hole in the earth, but the hole was without meaning. They piled lumber, steel and brick about the hole, but these supplies were without meaning. Slowly they laid brick on brick, stone on stone until a wall emerged from the sides of the hole. Then steel was laid from wall to wall and a wire mesh was laid on this steel. But still there was little meaning in it all. At last the roof was put on and the rooms trimmed out. Still we had only a building. Then one day people gathered there to sing, pray and work together in the sanctuary of our building. Only then did the meaning of all that preceded become abundantly clear. The stone and steel and labor and expense took on meaning at last—that men might worship God—the last for which the first was made.—*Joseph S. Johnston, Epworth Methodist Church, Norfolk, Va.*

He Was Not Prepared

A great surgeon was travelling on a train on vacation. The train was wrecked. As he stood by the side of the tracks, he watched the wounded being brought from the wreckage. A guard recognized him and appealed for his help. With tragic face he replied: "If I only had my instruments!" The great surgeon was not prepared when he might have done so much.—*Roland E. Turnbull, First Baptist Church, Alton, Ill.*

The Wages of Sin

Running diagonally across the Tiergarten, Berlin's famous park, is a road which dramatically tells the story of the rise and fall of Germany. It is lined with statues of all the German princes and kings, while at the base of each figure are grouped the notable men of each period. Today, of course, it is in ruins. It begins amid the devastation of once great houses and runs through, not an ordered park, but an overgrown paddock. And the statues? Some are splintered to pieces, others, little damaged, look grotesque and foolish amid the tall weeds, others again have lost an arm or a leg or lean over at an absurd angle. And at the end of the road, where the Kaiser of the first world war is the last figure, there are just ruins and more ruins, all that remains of central Berlin. How truly this scene presents the consequences which fall upon a nation when it ignores the moral realities of God's universe and forgets that there is a king who rules, not only over the church, but the world.—*Alan Walker, Methodist Church of Australasia, Waverly, Australia.*

Where Faith Counts

In Hamburg I spent some time moving among the people living in the cellars and former air-raid shelters of the ruined city. In one huge lightless and almost airless bunker I found two women in one of its tiny rooms. Each had lost her husband and her children in the war. Now they were barely existing under pitiable conditions and in a human sense the future could seemingly bring little relief to their hearts. Yet on the walls of that cell-like room was a picture of the Good Shepherd; on the box which served as a table were two well-thumbed Bibles and in a small frame was a text of Scripture: "God is my salvation—I will trust and not be afraid. He is my strength and my song."—*Alan Walker, Methodist Church of Australasia, Waverly, Australia.*

The Value of Perspective

A group of army airmen stationed in Texas were enjoying a "bull-session." The discussion centered around the question of which was the biggest state in the Union. A Texan was making his claim without fear of contradiction. The gentleman from California was silent. So was the gentleman from Montana. Finally the Coloradoan spoke up: "How do you figure it, Tex? Are you thinking merely in terms of the horizontal? Why not include the vertical? I've been doing some figuring mysyelf. My state averages a mile high and we have you beaten in cubic miles." Our situation and our problems look differently when we go higher and face them in a new perspective. The human then merges into the divine.—*Harold H. Wright, First Congregational-Unitarian Church, Fort Collins, Colo.*

It Makes a Difference

A sparkling little old lady once told me: "For many years I read the Bible in order to discover what the Bible had to say, but in recent years I have learned to read the Bible and find what God has to say." There is a great difference. Men can quote the Bible on opposing sides of a debate and their authority is not enhanced one whit. But let man discover God through the inspiring and revealing stimulation of the Bible, then he will speak as one having authority.—*Ensworth Reisner, First Methodist Church, Milwaukee, Wis.*

Sermons in Review

The Jericho Road of Life

IN a sermon preached at the winter commencement exercises of Aurora College in December, ROLAND E. TURNBULL of First Baptist Church, Alton, Ill., speaks of "The Challenge of the Jericho Road." He begins by telling the story of the litle boy who asserted that the parable of the good Samaritan "teaches me that when I am in trouble, someone should come to help *me!*"

He then goes on to imagine a conversation between a teacher of philosophy, a scientist and a preacher discussing the meaning of the same parable. To the philosopher it was a matter of relativity. "The whole story falls apart," he said, "unless you postulate the good Samaritan being at a certain place at a certain time." His presence there, the first speaker concluded, was due either to chance or providence.

The scientist thought the philosopher had a point but felt that a more important factor was present in the story, namely that the Samaritan was prepared. Had he not been he could have done little to help the wounded man. (See the illustration by Mr. Turnbull on the opposite page.) The minister, however, felt that his companions had missed the most important point of all. He contended that the greatest significance lay in the fact that the Samaritan had compassion. Who knows but that the priest and the Levite were as fully prepared, and certainly they were there. One thing we do know—they did not have compassion because they passed by.

A Road We All Travel

The sermon then makes the application. We are all on the Jericho Road of life. Who knows what conditions will be met? Ergo, taking it for granted that chance or providence will bring us to many counterparts of the robbed and wounded man, we must be prepared and we must have compassion.

"Very few of us are going to be heroes," he concludes, "but this is true —that if some of us do not take our places on the Jericho Road of life, prepared and with the spirit of compassion—then some people and some institutions are going to die."

A sermon on "Your Accent" comes to us from La Jolla, California, contributed by WILLIAM FORSHAW of the Union Congregational Church there. Based on the text, Matthew 26:73, [Certainly you are also one of them, for your accent betrays you.] the author points out how one's accent tells a lot about one's history, place of birth and the nature of one's life. It also betrays one's culture, something of one's temperament and one's character. There is the accent of nationality and the accent of spirituality.

He then turns to the story of Peter's betrayal from which the text is taken and gives a brief resumé of the background of the text, describing how the denial came about. He ends this section with the picture of Peter going out into the night, weeping bitterly.

What of the accent of Jesus? Mr. Forshaw asks this question and proceeds to build a description of what it must have been like. "Like Peter, he would have had a gutteral Galilean accent; but the roughness would be submerged in rich, deep intonations; a strong accent expressing a warm loving nature, a vigorous mind, a unique spirituality. There would be verve in it and an indication of the abundant life he lived and promised to those who believed in him. It would be an accent heavily weighted with reminders of the Father. . . . His accent would have a penetrating quality showing the 'wealth of conviction that comes from insight.' 'Never man spake as this man.'"

The Accent of Christ in Ours

How will this same accent of Christ be seen in you when you live for him? There will be a sigh over your own weakness. But that weakness may be overcome by the help of the Holy Spirit. There will be a tenderness for the weakness of others and a resolution to help them. There will be a confidence in the shepherd and guardian of our souls. And as the Savior is at hand to redeem us these things will be apparent in our accents and we will show him in our lives.

A lesson in humility is found in a sermon by GEORGE L. FITZGERALD, rector of the Church of St. James the Apostle in Westville, Mass. It takes verses three and four of the eighth Psalm as its text and asks the question "What is man?" This day of independence from God, the author points out in his introduction, is one of great danger for the spiritual values which are discredited by many men. "We have too often felt that *we* were "Lords of all we survey" (Italics mine). But as we get nearer to God and the eternal values we become humble and penitent.

Difficult times bring us nearer to God, too, and make us strong. Even our scientists in this maturely scientific age are our most terrified and humble people. They see that our greatest need is a reaffirmation of spiritual values to help us rightly to use the new power they have discovered for good rather than for destruction.

"Perhaps it might help us to become more humble if we pause for a moment to consider that most of these great advances in the physical world are not so much the *inventions* of men as they are the *discoveries* of God's laws." Then when we "consider God's heavens, and the work of his fingers" we become even more humble and consider: "What is man that thou art mindful of him . . ."

The things of nature win our admiration and wonder—the wrens that build their nest in the same spot year after year—the tiny humming bird that flies from Labrador to Mexico and back without ever getting off its course—the homing pidgeon that flies directly home at a speed of 40 to 50 miles an hour.

The rector from Westville is himself a pilot and he illustrates from his own experience how carefully men must consider the problems of navigation to do what these birds do by instinct. "These instances should be enough to impress upon us that man, in spite of all his remarkable progress in discovering the secrets of our universe, is still but a fumbling, awkward creature in God's sight." What is man that thou art mindful of him?

"So," he says, "it is not to be wondered at that our best minds today are likely to be our most humble minds . . . and they pray that in these critical days man may again 'walk humbly before God,' and may regain his sense of direction and destiny as one made 'a little lower than the angels.'"

"We cannot solve all our problems," he concludes, "but we can make a small beginning . . . by 'walking humbly with our God,' seeking the better way. And if enough of us will do that in our individual parishes and communities, then it will be discovered that we, like the birds, can never be 'lost' in God's sight . . ."—G. H. B.

The Essential Knowledge

A passenger stood on the deck of a boat which was traversing the St. Lawrence rapids. After they had successfully negotiated the course he spoke to the pilot. "I suppose you have been navigating this river for so many years you know where all the shoals and rocks are," he said. The pilot replied, "It is true I have been a pilot here for many years but I do not know where all the rocks are. I only know where the deep waters are." —*Perry L. Huffaker, West Milton, Ohio.*

This column, known previously as "Speaking of Sermons," is designed to bring to the attention of Pulpit readers some of the many fine sermons which lack of space prevents printing in full. They are given here in the form of reviews in the hope that the fine material they contain may serve as inspiration and "thought starters" for our readers.

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